

Message Text

MRN: 1976ISLAMA003402 SEGMENT NUMBER: 000001 ERROR READING TEXT INDEX
FILE; TELEGRAM TEXT FOR THIS SEGMENT IS UNAVAILABLE
MRN: 1976ISLAMA003402 SEGMENT NUMBER: 000002 ERROR READING TEXT INDEX
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ADP971
SECRET

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
----- 078691

R 050938Z APR 76
FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4859
INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
US MISSION NATO 21

S E C R E T SECTION 3 OF 4 ISLAMABAD 3402

EXDIS

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (PARA 15)

EMBASSY'S PERSPECTIVE, HOWEVER, AND DRAWING ON THE
HELPFUL COMMENTS FROM AMBASSADORS MACOMBER AND HELMS,
THERE ARE A NUMBER OF THOUGHTS WE WOULD LIKE TO PASS
ON TO DEPARTMENT.

11. IRAN. THE MOST IMPORTANT OF THE THREE, IN TERMS
OF MILITARY STRENGTH AND NATIONAL WEALTH, WOULD BE
IRAN. AS EMBASSY TEHRAN NOTES, THERE WOULD BE A
NATURAL HESITANCY ON THE PART OF THE SHAH IN JOINING
SINCE HE MAY FEAR THAT IT WILL LEVY MILITARY ASSISTANCE
BURDENS, AND PERHAPS, IMPLICITLY, FURTHER ECONOMIC AID
OBLIGATIONS, ON IRAN WITHOUT OFFERING MUCH IN RETURN TO
HELP ENSURE IRAN'S TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY. BHUTTO IS
CONSEQUENTLY FACED WITH THE FACT THAT THE ONE COUNTRY
WHOSE MEMBERSHIP IS PIVOTAL - IRAN - WOULD BE MOST
HESITANT TO JOIN THE GROUPING. BHUTTO HAS DISCUSSED
HIS PROPOSAL SEVERAL TIMES WITH THE SHAH WHO HAS
EXPRESSED GENERAL INTEREST AND SUPPORT. AS EMBASSY
TEHRAN NOTES, HIS INTEREST MAY BASICALLY BE A FUNCTION
OF HIS DESIRE TO SEEM TO BE FORTHCOMING WITH BHUTTO.
EVEN WHILE BEING GENERALLY POSITIVE, HOWEVER, THE SHAH
DID HAVE TWO CONCERNS WHICH HE HAS PASSED ON TO BHUTTO.
THE SHAH HAS SAID THAT HE WOULD WANT TO BE CERTAIN

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THE NEW ORGANIZATION WOULD IN NO WAY RESULT IN A DECREASED WILLINGNESS ON THE PART OF THE US TO SUPPORT IRAN IN ITS LEGITIMATE DEFENSIVE NEEDS. WE ASSUME THAT PAKISTAN AND TURKEY AS WELL WOULD WANT SOME REASSURANCE THAT A NEW ORGANIZATION WHICH MIGHT CONCEIVABLY REPLACE CENTO WOULD NOT MEAN ANY LESSENING OF WHAT THEY SEE AS A US COMMITMENT. WE BELIEVE, HOWEVER, THAT FOR PAKISTAN AND IRAN THE CENTERPOINT OF THEIR MILITARY ASSISTANCE ARRANGEMENTS WITH THE US ARE THE 1959 BILATERAL AGREEMENTS, NOT THE CENTO TREATY. WE WOULD ASSUME THAT SIMILARLY TURKEY WOULD LOOK MORE TOWARD ITS NATO TIES AND OTHER BILATERAL ARRANGEMENTS WITH THE US RATHER THAN CENTO AS THE BASIS FOR ITS MILITARY COOPERATION WITH US. IF BHUTTO IS SUCCESSFUL IN PERSUADING THE SHAH TO JOIN THE ALLIANCE, AND IF THE GROUPING DOES BECOME A REALITY, WE THINK IT WOULD BE IN OUR INTEREST TO ASSURE THE THREE STATES THAT WE DO NOT SEE THE GROUPING AS INIMICAL TO OUR OWN NATIONAL INTERESTS AND THAT ITS FORMATION WOULD NOT JEOPARDIZE THE PRESENT BILATERAL RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE US AND THE THREE COUNTRIES NOR THE PRESENT ACCESS OF HOST MEMBER STATES TO US MILITARY EQUIPMENT. WITH THESE TIES TO ALL THREE, THE US WOULD PRESUMABLY BE IN A POSITION TO GIVE THE DEGREE OF PUBLIC SUPPORT TO THE NEW GROUPING THAT THESE THREE WOULD THINK IN THEIR OWN BEST INTERESTS.

12. THE SHAH'S SECOND CONCERN INVOLVED EVENTUAL EXPANSION OF MEMBERSHIP, WHICH HE FAVORED. IF THE GROUPING WERE CONCEIVED AS A NUCLEUS OF INTERESTED STATES, WITH THE CONDITION THAT ANY REGIONAL NATION COULD JOIN WHICH HAD THE SAME REGIONAL GOALS AND ASPIRATIONS, THE CONCEPT COULD BE MORE ATTRACTIVE TO THE SHAH.

13. TURKEY. WE DO NOT HAVE THE BACKGROUND TO COMMENT ON LENGTH ON THE ADVANTAGES TO THE TURKS OF SUCH A GROUPING AND TREATY. WE WOULD NOTE, HOWEVER, THAT AS AMBASSADOR MACOMBER HAS POINTED OUT, THE TURKISH
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GOVERNMENT HAS UNDERTAKEN A PERCEPTIBLE POLICY SHIFT FROM LOOKING WESTWARD TOWARDS EUROPE TO A GROWING AWARENESS OF THE IMPORTANCE OF ITS FELLOW MUSLIM STATES TO TURKEY'S WELL-BEING. ALSO, RECENT EVENTS IN ITS BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP WITH THE UNITED STATES HAS

SEEMED TO LEAD TO A DECREASED WILLINGNESS ON THE PART OF TURKEY TO DEPEND ON US AS A GUARANTOR OF ITS SECURITY. FOR BOTH THESE REASONS, A REGIONAL GROUPING AND TREATY MIGHT BE ATTRACTIVE TO THE TURKS.

14. PAKISTAN. WE SEE SEVERAL INTERNATIONAL AND DOMESTIC PLUSES FOR PAKISTAN - MOST PROBABLY THE SAME ONES BHUTTO SEES INTERNATIONALLY, PAKISTAN'S SENSE OF SECURITY CAN BE HEIGHTENED THROUGH JOINING TURKEY AND IRAN IN A SECURITY ARRANGEMENT. PAKISTAN FEELS ITS SECURITY THREATENED BY INDIA AND AFGHANISTAN ACTING NOT ONLY ON THEIR OWN BUT ALSO AS ASSOCIATES OF THE SOVIET UNION. THE GOP WOULD CERTAINLY SEE A SAFETY IN NUMBERS THROUGH THE REGIONAL ASSOCIATION THAT IT DOES NOT NOW HAVE. THE PAKS MAY ALSO SEE ENHANCED PROSPECTS OF RECEIVING IRANIAN ASSISTANCE IN THE ACQUISITION OF MILITARY EQUIPMENT, AND MAY BELIEVE THAT SAUDI ARABIA WILL FEEL MORE CONFIDENT SUPPLYING MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO PAKISTAN MORE CLOSELY TIED TO IRAN.

15. AN AGREEMENT WITH FELLOW MUSLIM STATES TO ENSURE MUTUAL SECURITY WOULD BE IN KEEPING WITH BHUTTO'S NEW FOREIGN POLICY, WHICH HE HAS BUILT SINCE THE LOSS OF EAST PAKISTAN, AND HIS EMPHASIS ON CLOSE RELATIONS WITH THE MUSLIM STATES (PARTICULARLY THE WEALTHIER ONES), AND THE THIRD WORLD. BHUTTO ALSO PROBABLY WOULD SEE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE NEW GROUP AND THE EVENTUAL DISSOLUTION OF CENTO AS REMOVING ONE OF THE MAIN IMPEDIMENTS TO PAKISTAN'S MEMBERSHIP IN THE NON-ALIGNED GROUP. HE IS ENOUGH OF A REALIST, HOWEVER, TO UNDERSTAND THAT INDIAN OPPOSITION TO HIS MEMBERSHIP WOULD STILL BE A MAJOR OBSTACLE NOT EASILY OVERCOME. BHUTTO WOULD BE CONFIDENT THAT THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A NEW REGIONAL GROUPING WOULD BE SUPPORTED BY THE PRC WHICH
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WOULD PROBABLY SEE THE GROUPING AS BASICALLY ANTI-USSR MOTIVATED AND WOULD THEREFORE APPROVE OF IT."2

16. THE PRIME MINISTER ALSO UHLMMA EXPECTED SUBSTANTIAL DOMESTIC BENEFITS TO BE GAINED FROM THE FORMATION OF THE NEW GROUP. HE HAS TOLD THE AMBASSADOR ITS INCEPTION WOULD BE HERALDED BY A MAJOR ANNOUNCEMENT WHICH WOULD GALVANIZE PUBLIC OPINION AND ENCOURAGE PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR THE PROPOSAL. IT WOULD BE ONE ISSUE ABOUT WHICH THE PRIME MINISTER COULD BE REASONABLY CERTAIN HE WOULD HAVE THE NEARLY UNIVERSAL SUPPORT OF ALL PAKISTANIS. MOST WOULD SEE IT, REGARDLESS OF HOW IT WERE ANNOUNCED,

ASHJTATER PROTECTION, EXEMPLIFIED BY IRAN'S MEMBERSHIP,
AGAINST THE ASSOCIATES OF THE SOVIET UNION WHICH DIRECTLY
THREATEN PAKISTAN - INDIA AND AFGHANISTAN - AND THIS
WOULD BRING IT SUPPORT FROM NATIONALIST AS WELL AS

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MRN: 1976ISLAMA003402 SEGMENT NUMBER: 000004 ERROR READING TEXT INDEX
FILE; TELEGRAM TEXT FOR THIS SEGMENT IS UNAVAILABLE

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLICIES, COLLECTIVE SECURITY, REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 05 APR 1976
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: greeneet
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976ISLAMA03402
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: FULL TEXT ON MICROFILM
Executive Order: GS
Errors: CORE1
Film Number: P760057-1895
From: ISLAMABAD
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760497/aaaadfro.tel
Line Count: 177
Locator: TEXT ON MICROFILM, ADS TEXT UNRETRIEVABLE
Office: ACTION
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: 76 TEHRAN 3247, 76 ANKARA 2110
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: greeneet
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags: ANOMALY
Review Date: 08 JUN 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <08 JUN 2004 by SmithRJ>; APPROVED <04 OCT 2004 by greeneet>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: BHUTTO'S PROPOSAL FOR NEW REGIONAL GROUPING
TAGS: PFOR, MARR, PK, TU, IR, CENTO, (BHUTTO, ALI)
To: STATE ANKARA TEHRAN
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006